

**CLAIMS**

What is claimed is:

- 1    1.    A single layer ground cover for preventing weed growth comprising:  
2                a fabric providing at least one degradable portion running lengthwise of  
3                the fabric and having opposed edges; and  
4                a non-degradable portion adjacent said opposed edges of said  
5                degradable portion, wherein said degradable portion comprises from about  
6                5% to about 75% of the area of said ground cover, and wherein said  
7                degradable portion substantially degrades before said non-degradable portion  
8                after exposure to ambient conditions.
- 1    2.    The ground cover of claim 1, wherein said ground cover is a woven fabric and  
2                said degradable portion comprises degradable warp yarns and non-  
3                degradable weft yarns and said non-degradable portion comprises non-  
4                degradable warp and weft yarns.
- 1    3.    The ground cover of claim 2, wherein said at least one degradable portion  
2                consists essentially of a polyolefin and said at least one non-degradable  
3                portion comprises a polyolefin and a UV stabilizer.
- 1    4.    The ground cover of claim 3, wherein said polyolefin is polypropylene.
- 1    5.    The ground cover of claim 3, wherein said UV stabilizer is selected from the  
2                group consisting of carbon blacks, hindered amines, and mixtures thereof.
- 1    6.    The ground cover of claim 6, wherein said degradable portions comprise from  
2                about 15% to about 50% of the area of said ground cover.
- 1    7.    The ground cover of claim 1, wherein said degradable portion substantially  
2                degrades within about 12 to about 24 months after exposure to ambient  
3                conditions.

1 8. The ground cover of claim 1, having a plurality of said degradable portions  
2 at repeating intervals across the width of said fabric, separated by non-  
3 degradable portions.

1 9. A method for facilitating tree growth and preventing weed growth  
2 comprising:  
3 providing a ground cover comprising at least one degradable portion  
4 and at least one non-degradable portion;  
5 locating the ground cover on a section of ground to be planted;  
6 cutting a hole in said degradable portion of the ground cover;  
7 planting a plant within said hole; and  
8 covering said ground cover with soil sufficiently to at least bury it.

1 10. A method for facilitating tree growth, as set forth in claim 9, wherein said  
2 step of providing a ground cover comprises selecting a single layer ground  
3 cover for preventing weed growth comprising  
4 a fabric providing at least one degradable portion running lengthwise of  
5 the fabric and having opposed edges; and  
6 a non-degradable portion adjacent said opposed edges of said  
7 degradable portion, wherein said degradable portion comprises from about  
8 5% to about 75% of the area of said ground cover, and wherein said  
9 degradable portion substantially degrades before said non-degradable portion  
10 after exposure to ambient conditions.